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*ESSAYS ON VOCATION*

EDITED BY BASIL MATHEWS

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**MEDICINE AND NURSING**

BY

**SIR WILLIAM OSLER**

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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a woman who has not to work for her living, who is without urgent domestic ties, is very apt to become a dangerous element unless her energies and emotions are diverted in a proper channel. One skilled in hearts can perhaps read in her face the old, old story; or she calls to mind that tender verse of Sappho—

' As the sweet-apple blushes on the end of the bough,  
the very end of the bough, which the gatherers over-  
looked, nay overlooked not but could not reach.'

But left alone, with splendid capacities for good, she is apt to fritter away a precious life in an aimless round of social duties, or in spasmodic efforts at church work. Such a woman needs a vocation, a calling which will satisfy her heart, and she should be able to find it in nursing.

There is no higher mission in this life than nursing God's poor. In so doing a woman may not reach the ideals of her soul; she may fall far short of the ideals of her head, but she will go far to satiate those longings of the heart from which no woman can escape. Romola, the student, helping her blind father, and full of the pride of learning, we admire; Romola, the devotee, carrying in her withered heart woman's heaviest disappointment, we pity; Romola, the nurse, doing noble deeds amid the pestilence, rescuing those who were ready to perish, we love.

On the stepping-stones of our dead selves we rise to higher things, and in the inner life the serene heights are reached only when we die unto those selfish habits and feelings which absorb so much of our lives. To each one of us at some time, I suppose, has come the blessed impulse to break away from all such ties and follow cherished ideals. Too often it is but a flash of youth, which darkens down with the growing years. Though the dream may never be realized, the impulse will not

have been wholly in vain if it enables us to look with sympathy upon the more successful efforts of others. In institutions the corroding effect of routine can be withstood only by maintaining high ideals of work; but these become the sounding brass and tinkling cymbals without corresponding sound practice. In some of us the ceaseless panorama of suffering tends to dull the fine edge of sympathy with which we started. Against this benumbing influence, we physicians and nurses have but one enduring corrective—the practice toward patients of the Golden Rule of Humanity as announced by Confucius: ‘What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others,’ so familiar to us in its positive form as the great Christian counsel of perfection, in which alone are embraced both the law and the prophets.

ideals, expressed in that most 'memorable of human documents', the Hippocratic oath; and fourthly, the conception and realization of medicine as the profession of a cultivated gentleman.

A second distinctive feature is the remarkable solidarity. To no other profession is the word universal applicable in the same sense. The celebrated phrase used of the Catholic Church is in truth much more appropriate when applied to medicine. It is not the prevalence of disease nor the existence everywhere of special groups of men to treat it that betokens this solidarity, but it is the identity throughout the civilized world of our ambitions, our methods, and our work. To wrest from nature the secrets which have perplexed philosophers in all ages, to track to their sources the causes of disease, to correlate the vast stores of knowledge, that they may be quickly available for the prevention and cure of disease—these are our ambitions. Carefully to observe the phenomena of life in all its phases, normal and perverted, to make perfect that most difficult of all arts, the art of observation, to call to aid the science of experimentation, to cultivate the reasoning faculty, so as to be able to know the true from the false—these are our methods. To prevent disease, to relieve suffering, and to heal the sick—this is our work.

Thirdly, its progressive character. Based on science, medicine has followed and partaken of its fortunes, so that in the great awakening which has made the nineteenth memorable among centuries the profession received a quickening impulse more powerful than at any period of its history. With the sole exception of the physical sciences, no other department of human knowledge has undergone so profound a change. And not only in what has been actually accomplished in unravelling the causes of disease, in perfecting methods of prevention,

and in wholesale relief of suffering, but also in the unloading of old formulae and in the substitution of the scientific spirit of free inquiry for cast-iron dogmas we see a promise of still greater achievement and of a more glorious future.

And lastly, the profession of medicine is distinguished from all others by its singular beneficence. It alone does the work of charity in a Jovian and God-like way, dispensing with free hand truly Promethean gifts. Search the scriptures of human achievement and you cannot find anything to equal in beneficence the introduction of Anaesthesia, Sanitation, with all that it includes, and Asepsis—a short half-century's contribution towards the practical solution of the problems of human suffering, regarded as eternal and insoluble. Nor can it be gainsaid that of late years our record as a body has been more encouraging in its practical results than those of the other learned professions. Not that we all live up to the highest ideals, far from it—we are only men. But we have ideals, which means much, and they are realizable, which means more. Of course there are Gehazis among us who serve for shekels, whose ears hear only the lowing of the oxen and the jingling of the guineas, but these are exceptions. The rank and file labour earnestly for good, and self-sacrificing devotion animates our best work.

The commonest as well as the saddest mistake is to mistake one's profession, and this we doctors do often enough, some of us, without knowing it. There are men who have never had the preliminary education which would enable them to grasp the fundamental truths of the science on which medicine is based. To the physician particularly a scientific discipline is an incalculable gift, of which leaves his whole life, giving exactness to habits of thought and tempering the mind with that judicious faculty of distrust which can alone, amid the uncertainties

of practice, make him wise unto salvation. For perdition inevitably awaits the mind of the practitioner who has never had the full inoculation with the leaven, who has never grasped clearly the relations of science to his art, and who knows nothing, and perhaps cares less, for the limitations of either.

Biology touches the problems of life at every point, and may claim, as no other science, completeness of view and a comprehensiveness which pertains to it alone. To all whose daily work lies in her manifestations the value of a deep insight into her relations cannot be overestimated. The study of biology trains the mind in accurate methods of observation and correct methods of reasoning, and gives to a man clearer points of view, and an attitude of mind more serviceable in the working-day world than that given by other sciences or even by the humanities.

Chemistry, anatomy, and physiology give that perspective which enables him to place man and his diseases in their proper position in the scheme of life, and afford at the same time that essential basis upon which alone a trustworthy experience may be built. Each one of these is a science in itself, complicated and difficult, demanding much time and labour for its acquisition, so that in the few years which are given to their study the student can only master the principles and certain of the facts upon which they are founded. Only so far as they bear upon a due understanding of the phenomena of disease do these subjects form part of the medical curriculum, and for us they are but means—essential means it is true—to this end. A man cannot become a competent surgeon without a full knowledge of human anatomy and physiology, and the physician without physiology and chemistry flounders along in an aimless fashion, never able to gain any accurate conception of

most likely branch in which to succeed, or a student, with the brazen assurance which only ignorance can give, announces that he intends to be a gynecologist or an oculist. No more dangerous members of the profession exist than those born into it, so to speak, as specialists.

I would urge students to start with no higher ambition than to join the noble band of general practitioners. It is amusing to read and hear of the passing of the family physician. There never was a time in our history in which he was so much in evidence, in which he was so prosperous, in which his prospects were so good or his power in the community so potent. He still does the work ; the consultants and the specialists do the talking and the writing, and take the fees. By the work I mean that great mass of routine practice which brings the doctor into every household in the land and makes him, not alone the adviser, but the valued friend. A well-trained, sensible doctor is one of the most valuable assets of a community, worth to-day, as in Homer's time, many another man.

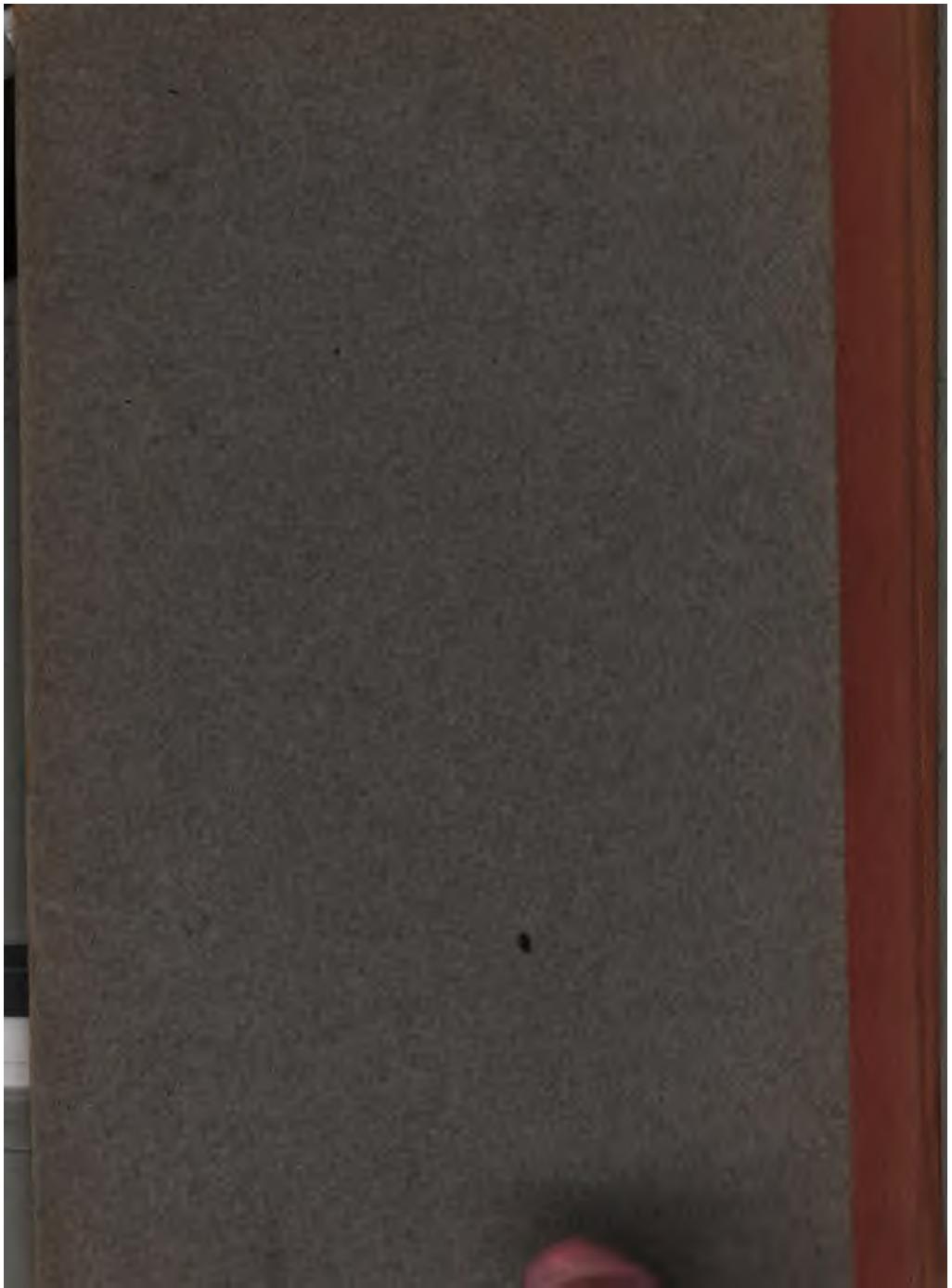
Professional work of any sort tends to narrow the mind, to limit the point of view, and to put a hall-mark on a man of a most unmistakable kind. In no profession does culture count for so much as in medicine, and no man needs it more than the general practitioner, working among all sorts and conditions of men, many of whom are influenced quite as much by his general ability, which they can appreciate, as by his learning, of which they have no measure.

Some will tell you that the profession is underrated, unhonoured, underpaid, its members social drudges—the very last profession they would recommend a young man to take up. Listen not to these croakers ; there are such in every calling, and the secret of their discontent is not hard to discover. The evils which they deprecate

Individually, man, the unit, the microcosm, is fast bound in chains of atavism, inheriting legacies of feeble will and strong desires, taints of blood and brain. What wonder, then, that many, sore let and hindered in the race, fall by the way, and need a shelter in which to recruit or to die, a hospital, in which there shall be no harsh comments on conduct, but only, so far as is possible, love and peace and rest. Here we learn to scan gently our brother man, judging not, asking no questions, but meting out to all alike a hospitality worthy of the Hôtel Dieu, and deeming ourselves honoured in being allowed to act as its dispensers. Here, too, are daily before our eyes the problems which have ever perplexed the human mind ; problems not presented in the dead abstract of books, but in the living concrete of some poor fellow in his last round, fighting a brave fight, but sadly weighted, and going to his account 'unhouselled, disappointed, unanel'd, no reckoning made'.

The trained nurse, then, has become one of the great blessings of humanity, taking a place beside the physician and the priest, and not inferior to either in her mission. Time out of mind she has made one of a trinity. Kindly heads have always been ready to devise means for allaying suffering ; tender hearts, surcharged with the miseries of this 'battered caravanserai', have ever been ready to speak to the sufferer of a way of peace, and loving hands have ever ministered to those in sorrow, need, and sickness.

A majority of the applicants to our schools are women who seek in nursing a vocation in which they can gain a livelihood in a womanly way ; but there is another aspect of the question which may now be seriously taken up in this country. There is a gradually accumulating surplus of women who will not or who cannot fulfil the highest duties for which Nature has designed them. Now





THE  
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS--EVOLUTION  
OF MEDICINE.

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BY  
HENRY O. MARCY, A.M., M.D., LL.D.,  
OF BOSTON, MASS.,  
PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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Delivered at the Forty-third Annual Meeting of the American Medical Association, at Detroit, Mich., June 7, 1892.

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THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Кодекса

## THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—EVOLUTION OF MEDICINE.

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BY HENRY O. MARCY, A.M., M.D., LL.D.,  
OF BOSTON, MASS.

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History repeats itself. Generations come and go and the problems of life are outlined from age to age in the same general way, since the underlying factors must ever remain unchanged. Each individual life modifies in a degree, both in character and quality, the sum total of human existence, and the kaleidoscopic pattern of the present offers new problems, and intensifies the interest in each succeeding year. The wise student profits by the history of the past and draws inspiration from its pages, as he confronts the present and with earnest endeavor shapes the future.

In this spirit we convene to-day from every part of our great continent, and devote our entire session to the consideration of the fundamental questions of life.

In the egotism of the present, we often underestimate the wisdom of those who have labored before us, and in our generation this has been especially true in medicine. When we recount the victories won and the enormous strides in scientific attainment within the last two decades, we may well be proud, but we must remember that a more careful study of the lives and labors of the really great of every age reveals a just comprehension of much that

we claim as modern, and perhaps as our own individual discovery.

The American Medical Association holds a position among the great medical societies of the world in many ways unlike that of any other. Born of a felt want among the members of a profession widely scattered, in a comparatively new and imperfectly developed country, it struggled along in the weakness of its infancy, conquering the disadvantages of great distances, compassed by comparatively slow, tedious, and expensive means of travel.

In no profession is it perhaps more true that the physician, in the large share, is the representative citizen, and no matter how devoted he may be to his profession, he ever manifests a deep and earnest interest in the body politic, of which he is an integral part.

Under the stimulus of the civilizing and developing forces of the present, the activities of life are intensified as never before, and wherever the American citizen determines his residence, he immediately looks about him to ascertain in what way he can become an active, formative factor, and paints with roseate tint the horizon of the future, in the confident belief that the new settlement is soon to be the town, the town the city, until the broad acres of unproductive pasture are mentally divided into corner lots and, by some mysterious, unknown influence, populated by the leaders in the great subdivided interests of the world of trade.

In close touch with the magnetic, electric influence of modern thought, it would, indeed, be the exception if the devotee of our art did not thus at once hold himself a co-worker upon terms of equality with his medical brother, no matter how favorably situated in the great centers of an older civilization and development. Indeed, he sometimes feels, and with reason, that there come to him advantages in his new surroundings which cannot pertain to the older

conservative centers of thought and training. Why should not this be true? Less closely allied to the dead past, closely in touch and sympathy with the burning ambition of the enthusiastic spirit of the living present, no problem seems to him impossible of solution, since the press keeps him in touch with the world, and for him modern science shall work out greater marvels than the miracles of Sacred Writ.

The early founders of this Association planted better than they knew, although he whom we shall always be glad to style the father of the American Medical Association, Dr. Nathan S. Davis, may well be called the seer and prophet of our profession. I voice with you a common sentiment—may he long be spared to wield, as from the first, his dominating influence in this great National Organization.

It was wisely enacted that our Association consist, in large degree, of delegated membership, since this makes it, as by no other plan, a representative body, and, as such, it is not too much for us to claim that we stand as the exponent of the medical thought and progress of our noble profession, represented in the United States alone by a membership of nearly one hundred thousand workers.

Modelled in a considerable degree upon the constitutional principles of our popular Government, we are supposed to recognize the wants and necessities, and, from year to year, to be able to outline and, in a measure, formulate the ever-changing needs and requirements of the public welfare.

Such an organization must have its own inherent law, styled "Our Code of Ethics." While you and I accept it as simple, sufficient, only determining in a very general way what constitutes the proper relationship of the members of a great profession to each other and to the body politic, it has been for many years, and is likely to continue, a question of discussion upon which there is a difference of opinion among honest and able men. The laity refuse to

accept this as any other than a stupendous joke, with the criticism, "When doctors disagree, who shall determine?" and regard the differences between the so-called schools of medicine quite in the light of the denominational lines in the Christian church. A closer, dispassionate view, however, clearly shows that the differentiation must be made alone between ignorance and knowledge, since it is only fair to grant that considerable classes of men, devoted to a common calling, must be adjudged alike honest, and that their own selfish interest, in the attainment of success in any given profession, must be determined by the adaptation of what they consider the best means to a given end. Judged from this standpoint, the question has no parallel in the world of theological belief, since the medical scientist is dealing with objective factors, now certainly in sufficient number largely to eliminate the unknown quantities in the earlier problems presented by disease. Formulated as axiomatic in its written law, the profession for centuries has welcomed every addition of fact by which mankind may be less the sufferer from disease. But the warping of the judgment by conservatism and prejudice has oftentimes in medicine, as in the allied professions, retarded rather than encouraged independent original observation and research.

Judged in the light of our present knowledge, it certainly does not require prophetic vision to determine the lines of our future professional progress, since they must be based only upon scientific data. Such development, in no uncertain tone, means the abolition of *ism* and *pathy*, and there will be introduced in their stead, a more or less accurate interpretation of scientific laws, as to what constitutes the treatment of disease, of which year by year, there is the constantly increasing demonstration that the mere administration of drugs, no matter how valuable, is the least important part.

The evolution of thought, first applied in a given

narrow direction by the founder of the so-called Homœopathic School of medicine is an admirable illustration of modern progress. Born in a measure as a protest to indiscriminate heroic dosing with powerful drugs, based upon a wild theoretic fancy, it owes its present existence largely to two factors. The first and by far most important, an unreasoning prejudice in the minds of a narrow conservative medical leadership, which by a kind of dogmatic ostracism persistently scouted the whole scheme as too preposterous for serious consideration, and hence aroused the active sympathy of the public for an ostracised minority, "as for the under dog in the fight," the critics themselves forgetting that in all diseased processes, nature is the physician's best ally, and that the sick do often recover without essential medication. The second, a wise appreciation of the advantages obtained by public sympathy and the determination to make the most from a haughty supercilious assumption of superiority by their critics. Under a competent leadership, from a handful of disappointed unsuccessful men, there has developed the most popular Homœopathic school of medicine, with a four years' graded course of instruction with restrictive critical examinations in all the fundamental branches of medical science, until the Homœopathic part is reduced to a mere addendum to the section of *materia medica*, almost as attenuated as the dilutions which, at its inception, it recommended to the credulity of its followers, a shadow of a name, a trade-mark in medicine.

A free government has its faults, its weaknesses. Under the fear that the individual right of the independent citizen will be interfered with by restrictive legislation as to who shall be considered competent to administer to the wants of a suffering public, laws regulating the practice of medicine, long recognized as necessitous in the great European governments, have slowly been enacted in most of the States of the

Union. When under State or General Government law, it shall be determined upon examination that men have been competently trained in the knowledge of the chief branches of medicine, few of the five per cent. contingent, calling themselves Homœopaths will be content to remain so denominated, while the great body politic of our profession should institute measures to make it easy for such men properly educated to enlist in the grand army of workers devoted to unbiased investigation and the practice of scientific medicine.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," the opposition even to a wrong is oftentimes the method by which it is developed into a monstrous evil. Note the different course of treatment which this *ism* received in Europe. The great Universities opened their doors to a willing demonstration of its real value and challenged the proof of its superiority in the treatment of disease in its general hospitals. The chairs of its professorships are vacant, and he who would learn of the development of the new art must come to the modern Athens of America, where the corner-stone of its temple was laid in the chambers of our Superior Courts of Justice by our own profession, who thus thought to destroy by legal enactment that which alone could feed on opposition.

As the indirect outgrowth of sectarian medicine and its influence upon the profession, in a general way, we have the anomaly of the New York State Medical Society, for so many years the supporter of this Association and foremost in its councils. Under the leadership of men who openly declared that the future progress of our profession demanded the abandonment of restrictive rules of polity, the very State Society from which the National Association emanated has withdrawn from affiliation with the general association upon the plea of restrictive and burdensome regulations, limiting official consultations to be held only with physicians properly educated.

In order that the American Medical Association might be free from any possible criticism of a narrow or illiberal spirit, the following resolution was unanimously adopted at its annual meeting in 1885:

"Resolved, That clause 1, of article IV, in the National Code of Ethics is not to be interpreted as excluding from professional fellowship, on the ground of differences in doctrine or belief, those who in other respects are entitled to be members of the regular medical profession. Neither is there any article or clause of the said 'Code of Ethics' that interferes with the exercise of the most perfect liberty of individual opinion and practice."

We cannot question that this is in the true spirit of liberalism, and it should be accepted by the most radical expounder of the theory of evolution in medical ethics. During the present year, I have made most careful study of the question in its various aspects, especially as pertaining to New York City, and without exception I have heard only universal depreciation of the present society relationships of the profession, coupled with the pronounced opinion that the times were ripe for early re-adjustment and restoration of harmony. It had been my confident belief that this year would have seen this much desired state of affairs consummated, and to have had in any degree an active part in the bringing about this result would have been considered by myself the greatest honor pertaining to the high office to which you have elected me. I can only advise moderation in your councils, believing that at a very early date, harmony will be restored, and the medical leaders of our great commercial center, almost of necessity the most influential teachers of our country, will be without exception in active co-operation with the National Association. However, the evil which we deprecate has had a resultant good in the formation of the New York State Medical Association composed in large share of active workers in this organization, and

which has adopted as a part of its organic law that, "the Code of Ethics of the American Medical Association shall be the Code of Ethics of this Association and shall form an integral part of their By-Laws." This large body of active workers in our profession have already established a permanent society home in New York City, with a large medical library, and a beautiful hall for the accommodation of its meetings. The eighth annual volume of its transactions has recently been published, containing nearly seven hundred pages, consisting of many valuable contributions upon original investigations and research. The society has upon its roll of membership, seven hundred and forty names. In a free discussion upon the subject with its leaders, as with those of the New York State Medical Society, I did not find a single individual who did not deprecate the existing division in the profession, and who would not welcome any honorable means by which reunion could be effected. The rivalry of the society interests has stimulated both to the increase of scientific research, until the fruitage of each is greater than that of the society before its division.

*The Relation of the American Medical Association to the General Profession in America.*—There has arisen, even among the warm supporters of the American Medical Association, the inquiry if the larger service of the organization to the profession at large had not been accomplished, coupled with the criticisms: that our country is far too great, and extending over too much area for any one central body; that the development of our art has grown beyond the possibility of personal compass; that this is the age of specialism; and that the evolution of the medicine of the future must of necessity be in the hands of the special societies devoted to the perfecting of certain lines of investigation.

In the recognition of a common want, there have been formed National Societies, limited in member-

ship, covering all the special branches of medicine and surgery. Under the leadership of a few master spirits, it has been thought quite sufficient to bring these special societies together at repeated intervals under the attractive title of "The American Congress of Physicians and Surgeons." All this personally meets my approval, when we consider the stimulating and refining influences of men meeting together bound by the common tie of special study and research. In the fruitage of such union of labor, the profession may well rejoice, but I cannot help thinking that such an argument is founded on a false conception of our profession and its duties and relation to our life work; since, regardless of the specialistic development to which we may subsequently attain, we must all begin upon a common level and master with greater or less fidelity and patience, the fundamental branches of medicine, and he who does this well and perfects himself most broadly and deeply in a general way, in practice as well as theory, finds himself subsequently the better fitted for specialistic labor. In the general field of medicine the great rank and file of the profession must continue to work, and as the Representative Body of this vast army of workers, the American Medical Association, without fear or favor, must continue to be its exponent. Here, as upon a common altar, the most obscure may bring his offering, and find inspiration which will help him subsequently to develop into a leader in some one of the many fields of specialistic research and contribute to the resources of his profession in such a way that we gladly entwine about his brow the laurels of immortality. The names of nearly all the great leaders of the American medical profession are engraved upon our own escutcheon, and he who recalls such men as Sims, Gross, Flint, Storer, Bowditch, Campbell, Richardson, Sayre, Davis, and a host of others, both dead and yet living, regards with a commendable pride the relationship and power which

these illustrious formative leaders have had in this great National Association.

Let there be no jealousy aroused between the National Societies of our country. The field is large, the work is ample, and many there be who are thoroughly competent to labor in their respective departments, and yet remain foremost in State and National Organizations. The American Medical Association has its own peculiar and legitimate field of work; at touch with the great body politic which it represents, it is quick to receive and to reflect the latest and the best from whatsoever source it may emanate, and to it the entire country, for its labors in the promotion of the highest welfare of the nation in the scientific department of medicine and its allied branches, owes a debt of gratitude which it can never repay.

*Relation of the Association to the State Societies.*—It has been my good fortune during the present year to attend several of the annual meetings of the State Medical Societies, and note the earnest work which is being locally accomplished. Although everywhere the privilege for associate labor in the National organization is recognized, the interest which the respective State Societies manifest, in this direction, is lacking in a general way, and very few comparatively of their members, especially from the Eastern States, attend our meetings. The State Societies were intended to be, in fact, branches of the National Organization, and as such each should work together in harmony for the good of all. A unification of the State Medical Societies as integral parts of the American Medical Association would go far toward making easy the solution of many questions by concert of action, and I would respectfully suggest that measures be at once instituted for the development of a much closer relationship between the State and National Societies, and that the request be made to every State Society that the dates of their annual

meetings shall be arranged so as not to conflict with that of the National Association. I have long deprecated this in my own State, where the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Medical Society occurs in June, the same week in which the Association convenes.

It would be well also, if it is within the limit of our power, to stimulate the State Societies to a more general active coöperation within their own boundaries, and I refer, as an illustration of this, to the Massachusetts Medical Society, with a present membership of over seventeen hundred, who devote two days to the annual meeting and close with a grand banquet, at which more than one-half of its entire membership are in attendance. In this way much could be accomplished in increasing and strengthening the influence and power of the medical profession and making its opinions felt in an ever-widening influence in our national polity.

*Journal of the Association.*—The Journal of our Association has already advanced to a position of influence, second to that of no other medical publication in America. With a circulation of over six thousand copies it is now a source of independent income. Under a wise leadership and editorial management it has steadily improved and gives promise of a much greater development. It should be a weekly interchange of thought and the distribution of the latest and best, at a very early future, to a membership of three or four times its present number, an ever increasing bond of union between our members, with whom it should be the pride, as it is at present within our power, to make it the leading journal of the world.

*Our Annual Meetings.*—The best disposition of the limited time at our disposal, at the annual meeting, has recently been a subject of active discussion. Much valuable time is wasted in our general sessions in the discussion of questions of minor importance. It seems to be within the nature of things, if you

would arouse most earnest discussion in an American convention, to bring up some minor clause of a by-law, upon the differences of which there will be found ready champions to fritter away hours in useless debate. To this criticism our organization has often been open, but happily less at each succeeding meeting, until now the especial addresses have justly become a noteworthy feature of the latest and the best.

*Section Work.*—We are glad to note the persistent effort which is being made for the better development of the Section work, along the lines of which the really great good comes to the profession from our Convention; not only is this noteworthy in the large number of very valuable original communications, but equally in the discussions which they evoke. Every encouragement should be given to the still further improvement of the Sections, and I earnestly enjoin upon all our members to come to the annual meetings with the purpose of spending, as far as possible, the entire week, that we may take time for our deliberations, and, by our example, offer an earnest protest to the great American fault of *hurry*, which too oftentimes is a synonym of imperfect work. Dr. Leartus Connor, of this city, gave a vigorous address last year before the Section of Ophthalmology, in the advocacy of better work in the Sections, which should be read by every member of the Association. If in any department of learning deliberation should be encouraged, it is certainly in that of the great issues of life with which we must necessarily deal. In this connection, it is not invidious to make reference to the objects and interests of that other National body which has just closed its session in this city, the American Academy of Medicine, which we believe has acted wisely in holding its meeting in conjunction with that of our Association, the objects of which are antagonistic to none, and should receive the cordial sympathy and support of

all. It has already accomplished much in elevating the standard of medicine in America, by demanding a more careful preliminary education and thorough training, and by its influence and power, it has aided largely in establishing *State Examining Boards* and having laws enacted for the protection of the people from incompetent and ignorant practitioners of medicine. In the furtherance of this work our Association, without dissent, should earnestly enlist, and demand from each individual member of our profession fitting qualifications for the discharge of the highest responsibilities in the welfare of our race; and that, so far as possible, the great body politic be instructed that their vital interests shall be protected from ignorance and imposture.

We cannot but deprecate the too frequent publishing, in the daily papers, of sensational reports of startling operations performed by men who are justly famous operators. This parading of their skill, served up with all the ghastly horrors of the imaginative reporter, may be conducive to a cheap notoriety, but it is certainly false to every sense of propriety and professional etiquette.

*State Medicine.*—Within the last few years State medicine has assumed an importance and magnitude never before appreciated, until it is now admitted that a very general class of interests incident to the public welfare should be relegated to men especially trained in the various departments of Sanitary Science, and it is not too much to believe, in the early future the citizen will demand of the State, as one of his inalienable rights, no matter how poor or obscure, or where located, that he shall be able to breathe an air free from infection, to live upon an uncontaminated soil, and be furnished with water ample in quantity and of a quality free from defilement.

Under the restrictive laws of such wise supervision, the infectious diseases will be curtailed, and it is to

be hoped ultimately they will be stamped out of existence.

In this connection I would call your attention to the great public necessity of the revision and re-organization of the so-called *Coroner Laws* in the different States, a subject upon which, as chairman of a committee appointed for this purpose, I have for several years made annual reports *in extenso* to this Association, pointing out clearly many defects of the existing system. The different State Boards of Health feel the necessity for immediate action in the correction of this, perhaps the most defective of all our methods of securing justice, a want which the legal profession recognize as much as our own. This, as well as the question of *expert testimony* in our courts of justice, as to who shall be considered competent to discharge this important branch of public service, are subjects well worthy of your early and careful consideration.

*Intemperance.*—This generation, as none other, has witnessed the discussion of topics of great moral reform, prominent among which is the question of intemperance, until, under an aggressive leadership, were it possible many would abolish the very law of fermentation. It has assumed national importance, in many localities placing the distribution of intoxicating liquors under legal control, and we now behold a political party as its outgrowth, with an active organization which would assume national supremacy. Many of our own profession are found within its ranks. This is not the place to discuss the question of temperance, or its political issues, but no class of citizens are so well qualified to instruct the public upon the uses and abuses of intoxicating liquors as the members of our own profession, and in this direction a greater responsibility rests upon the physician than upon any other citizen. I am glad to commend to your favorable support the organization of our own frater-

nity for the study of this subject and the best methods for its suppression. We are indebted to them for the demonstration that intemperance should not be regarded as a vice, but rather as a disease, and that appropriate measures should be instituted for its cure. Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Hartford, is a vigorous advocate of this modern view of intemperance as a disease, and shows by ample statistics that more than one-third of all who have been the inmates of asylums for the treatment of the intemperate, have remained permanently cured. "The curability of the inebriate is far more certain than that of the insane, the liberty of both is equally dangerous; one is recognized, the other is seldom restrained until he becomes a criminal. \* \* \* The inebriate is mentally and physically sick and needs the same help as the insane, and the question of care is simply one of adequate means and remedies to reach the disease." One of the most remarkable phenomena, widespread as the human race, disseminated alike among savage and civilized, is the demand for artificial stimulation.

The maddening influences of drink and its attendant crimes have already been greatly lessened, but diminished as are the uses of the stronger alcoholic preparations, in a somewhat corresponding ratio that of the lighter wines and malt liquors have increased, while the consumption of tea and coffee has enormously outgrown that of any previous time. Men struggling under the felt power of alcohol are never without a desire to find relief, which fact has been singularly overlooked, when adjudged from the standpoint of bad habits and the intemperate zealot who would correct them. Whatever may be thought of the imposture and illusive hopes of "The Golden remedy," the hundreds of intemperate men who, in the last year, have voluntarily sought relief in it attest the fact that the victims of this great evil desire a cure, and they should legitimately turn to

our profession and find under their wise administration, its mastery, as that of any other disease.

*National Board of Health.*—The advocacy of a National Board of Health is no new subject, in this Association. It seems but the corollary to the proposition in the organization of our governmental polity, that, if State Boards of Health have proved so efficient in the protection of the great public welfare, a National Board of Health would be equally necessitous in dealing with questions of widespread and general importance to the whole government, as also in the centralization and dissemination of valuable knowledge. It has been urged with reason, and I trust also it is soon to be carried into effect, that not only such a wisely selected Board of Commissioners should be reëstablished by the general government, but also that it should find its exponent in a specially appointed member of the Presidential Council to be known as Secretary of the Public Health. A committee was appointed by the Association last year to petition Congress for the establishment of a Department of Public Health with a chief Secretary, which will doubtless report at this meeting. In the United States such an organization is not only more necessary than that of any other country, on account of its wide-spread geographical area and population, existing under more diverse conditions, but also because the medical officers of our government in both the Army and the Navy Departments are much less in number than those of the European nations. However, great honor is to be accredited to our country from the very valuable services of the medical corps of both the Army and the Navy to which that of the Marine Hospital Service is no exception. We are deeply indebted to the American Public Health Association for the exceptional work which has been accomplished under its auspices in the advancement of sanitary science and the practical application of public hygiene. Its publications

have proved a very efficient means for the dissemination of valuable knowledge.

In 1879 a National Board of Health was appointed consisting of seven members, selected by the President from civil life, and four *ex officio* representing the Army, Navy, Marine Hospital Service and the Department of Justice. For three years this National Board had an active existence, and I have yet to hear any serious criticism of the very valuable work effected under its direction. Yet under the plea of economy, appropriations were denied and little is left of this public service except a name.

Although we cannot criticise too severely the action of our government in this direction, we have little to blame except ourselves, since the public are not educated to recognize its *occult* and unseen foes and are necessarily dependent on the medical profession for the dissemination of such knowledge. During the last decade it has been demonstrated as never before, that the causation of most of the infectious diseases that sweep over the country are particulate vital organisms, which infect the individual, reproducing to a possible harvest of death. Such knowledge makes clear certain outlining of rules for precaution and prevention, upon which are based the so-called Quarantine Laws against the invasion of foreign pestilences, as cholera, yellow fever, etc. This is really a small part of the public service in the protection of the community.

A National Health Department must be necessarily in part educational, and the diseases which cause the great harvest of death in a community, as diphtheria, typhoid and scarlet fever, and consumption are pests which the public have a right to demand of the government should be held in control, and it is not too much to believe that the foreshadowings of modern science point to their ultimate extinction. No greater economy can be exercised by our people than the endowment of such a Board with

every needed scientific appointment, with fully equipped laboratories for the careful study of all the sources of disease, which shall take in the surroundings of the individual and the means best adapted for his subsistence, so as to make him in the largest possible degree a healthy working member of the body politic, contributing his full share toward the public welfare.

In effect, everything dependent upon the development and continuance of a long life of the individual should fall legitimately within the scope of inquiry.

Upon demonstration of the need, no nation is so quick to respond and utilize its advantages as our own, and the real remedy must be found, not in complaint concerning the government when compared with that of other nations, where the enlightenment of the few serves to direct the conduct of the masses, but rather in the dissemination of knowledge broadcast among our people, and if each member of our profession would avail himself of that which is already known, and instruct those with whom he comes in daily contact, in a very brief period, in answer to a popular demand, emanating from the people, educated to perceive their great need, the advance in sanitary science in the United States would surpass the wildest dream of its present most enthusiastic devotee.

*The Department of Agriculture.*—The department of agriculture of our general government has been most efficient in the public service and has contributed to its welfare far beyond what has generally been supposed. As a broadening of its field of labor, a bill is now pending in Congress introduced by Senator Padlock, of Nebraska, which has for its purpose the protection of the public from the adulteration of food products and drugs in the United States. It is an important subject, an effort made in the right direction, for the protection of the people from stupendous frauds and imposture, resulting in great injury to

the community, oftentimes fraught with the gravest dangers to life, and it should meet with the heartiest approval and active support of our entire profession. The food products presented for sale in our markets should be reasonably safe for public consumption, as assured by government inspection. It is now demonstrated that our milk supply is often the means of dissemination of typhoid fever, and of the bacillus tuberculosis.

The diseases of our domestic animals require much more careful study, and the public necessity demands that the meat of only healthy animals should be permitted to be sold for consumption.

The wise restrictive legislation of European Governments, interdicting the sale of non-inspected meat, has been the subject of many public protests in our country, and the appeal to the necessities of our commercial interests appears to demand the inspection of all meat products for exportation. It is but just that our own citizens should be in this direction equally protected, as those of other nations, with whom we deal. Tuberculosis may be transmitted to man by the ingestion of tuberculous meat. Other diseases, as the transmission of the tape worm and trichinæ are illustrations much better known. Dr. Abbot, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Health, informs me that since the middle of February more than fifty cases of trichinosis infection with five deaths, have been reported in Boston. He gives it as his belief that at present a considerable proportion of the pork offered for sale in the Boston markets is infected with trichinæ.

*The Massing of the People in our Cities.*—The present is a generation of city builders, and in our own country our great centers of population have been intertwined within a half century with nearly 200,000 miles of iron ways, distances so vast that they can be appreciated only by comparison; more than sufficient to bind the continent

from ocean to ocean by eighty great highways of rapid travel, or, if projected in a single line, quite long enough to reach the moon. This wonderful system of steam communication has in its service a great force of workmen, a moving army in time of peace, ever subject to exposure and danger. This large factor of the body politic demands of our government a special supervision to minimize, as far as possible, their perils. The ease of inter-communication has greatly increased the movements of our ever restless people, while the demands of trade alone has organized under its banners an army of three hundred thousand professional travellers. Few of us can appreciate the activities of the present age. The railway systems of the United States alone have expended in the last ten years, in their development, an average annual sum of five hundred millions of dollars. In the year of 1889, in our country alone, one religious denomination erected over four thousand new churches, an average of over eleven each day. "Put them in line on the first day of January, when the sun went across the country on the lightning limited at the rate of a thousand miles an hour, his light would have fallen on a new church roof every third second as the sunrise flashed over hill and dale."

The complex questions of city living are ever becoming more and more difficult of solution. Can a million of people be massed together, and each live better, accomplish more, suffer less, and lengthen their existence? It is given to you alone to answer the question in the affirmative.

*Our Relations to the Medical Profession in Foreign Countries.*—In geometric ratio with the years our influence in the great body politic of the medical world increases. That which, a generation ago, seemed like the wild chimera of a scheming brain, an International Congress of Physicians and Surgeons, has been now ten times triennially repeated,

and the influence of each International Medical Congress has deepened and intensified. The day may be far distant when a universal language, now the Utopian dream of many, shall see its fulfillment, but in medicine it is an accomplished fact. No longer is its science written in the language of the few and buried in ponderous tomes for the resurrection of the coming centuries. Any discovery of real value almost at once, after its publication, is read throughout the civilized world. Wherever medicine is the better taught, there gather devoted students. In large numbers our representative youth are found in the great medical centers of learning in England, in France, in Germany; and even far-off poverty-stricken Italy is resuming again something of her former prestige and the mantles of the great masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are falling upon worthy shoulders of the sons of this present generation.

The relations of our Association with the great Societies of Europe have been in unbroken harmony until within the last two years. We have been delighted to receive from and send delegates to all the foreign Societies, and the unflagging interest and devotion of the American physician to his profession was illustrated in the enrolling of over six hundred and fifty delegates from the United States to the International Medical Congress, held in Berlin, in 1890, the largest number representing any nationality, excepting that of Germany. The great majority of these were delegates from this organization, a very considerable number of whom were also sent as delegates to the British Medical Association, which held its annual meeting in Birmingham. Unfortunately, many of these felt themselves deeply aggrieved at a seeming neglect on the part of the local committee.

By vote at the last annual meeting, the appointment of delegates to the British Medical Association was left to the President and Secretary General, with

full powers. My first act as your chief executive was the presentation of the subject to the Council of the British Medical Association; a copy of the correspondence is herewith appended. The result is all that could be asked and is embodied in the following resolution:

*"Resolved,* That the President of the Council be requested to inform Dr. Marcy that it is not proposed to deprive of any rights they may have acquired those American citizens who have been elected members of the British Medical Association, but as such elections have been found to be illegal, no more can be permitted to take place. Further, that the honorary membership of the Association is only given *honoris causa* to a few specially distinguished persons by vote at the Annual Meeting of the Association. And lastly, that the officers of this Association will always be pleased to receive and show every consideration and hospitality to all properly accredited American visitors."

The International Medical Congress to be held next year in Rome, already gives promise of renewed activity in the medical world of Europe, while energetic measures have been instituted in the Western Hemisphere for a successful meeting of the first Pan-American Congress, to be inaugurated in our own country the coming Columbian year. If our nation fulfills its apparent destiny, the early future will see no longer the necessity of our advanced pupils making European pilgrimages for original research and study in foreign languages, but the rather that our own great centers of learning will be selected as the Meccas of the best modern thought, where students of all nationalities shall gather for instruction.

The South American continent is emerging from its ruder state of semi-development and its far too long delayed civilization, and is undergoing a transformation, which promises much for the immediate future. Another century should make it the home of one hundred millions of prosperous peoples, and its vast resources should be utilized, not alone for more than fulfilling the golden dreams of its first

conquerors, but the adding of untold millions to the world's wealth and resources.

Professor Virchow, in his Presidential Address before the last International Medical Congress, congratulated the Surgeons of America as, at present, representing the best attainment of surgical teaching and practice in the world. It is not too much to claim that we are now equipped to compete successfully with any of the great centers of European learning for the teaching of medicine in all its numerous branches, and few more potent measures can be advocated, for the better union of all our western interests, than the moulding of the scientific thought, in its various branches of learning, of the leaders in this coming civilization of our great Southern Continent.

But I will not weary you with further detail as to possible obligations and duties, arising from our special knowledge and our relations to the general public, of whose interests, both of health and disease, we are the acknowledged custodians. We are a profession, oftentimes belittled and decried as fattening upon the public misfortunes, from the attendance upon whose ills we derive our direct support, but the broader view of our field of labor is the prevention of the very ills we are supposed to cure. From this standpoint, no profession, not even excepting that of the clergy, has a more noble vocation. The last two decades have witnessed a revolution in the surgical art, until it is now founded upon the great principles of a sure science, and is practiced with a certitude, and with results more remarkable than the tales of Aladdin.

The battles over the best methods of modern wound treatment have oftentimes waged fiercely at the meetings of this Association, and if not "fought to the finish," have certainly won glorious victories in behalf of humanity and the establishment of scientific truth. The new demonstrations upon the caus-

ation of disease have already revolutionized the teachings of medicine and introduced a brilliant era in the practice of our art.

Sanitary science, the prevention of disease, has largely curtailed the whole class of zymotic affections, with a possible future promise of their eradication. Small-pox, which once swept as a pestilence unrestrained over continents, destroying over half of its victims, has, by the simple method of vaccination, been placed within such limits that it is practically expunged from the death roll even of our great cities.

*Consumption.*—The fell destroyer, consumption, is the greatest scourge of the human race, counting its victims, in the United States alone, over one hundred thousand annually. We have the clear demonstration of its cause, as a particulate morbific entity, with its life history and development now clearly established; how it enters the human organism and by its propagation and development, results in the death of the individual. The discovery is sufficient honor to one man, we might almost say to one generation, since based upon such knowledge, there must develop means for its control, if not its extirmination.

“A nation’s health is a nation’s wealth,” a nation’s happiness. The application of the principles of modern science, as already known to you, introduced into the practice of daily living, would diminish sickness and suffering one-half, and the death rate by at least one-third.

Sorrow and mourning thus lifted from the race would make the future of our existence almost Utopian and change the whole aspect of life. Remove this burden, the expense attendant upon sickness and death would be lessened to the extent of hundreds of millions of dollars annually, and the income of the race would be doubled.

Whatever those untaught in medicine may think, you and I well know that we are not giving an

unbridled rein to an illusive fancy in imaginary speculation. It is a scientific demonstration, formulated in general terms, "the survival of the fittest."

Through the long lines of scientific research, dating back since man has knowledge of the introduction of life upon our planet, this law has held good. In its far reaching effect the individual of the present is no exception. Life itself may be denominated a battle for existence. The invisible vital organisms with which we are surrounded make up in numbers that which they lack in individual force. They utilize what seems the dead and decaying albuminoid products for their own development, thus separating into their ultimate elements the very material of existence and in its changed relations fit and prepare it for new and higher uses. Thus nothing is lost, nothing is wasted, simply changed, reformed to undergo anew its part in the great drama of life. This vital principle, the factor of existence, which has not yet been given to man in the equation of life, to be represented in known terms, permeates every living individual cell, and thereby gives it a vital inherent resisting power.

Devitalize this below a certain standard, and it becomes the prey of other living forces. This, in the individual, we denominate disease. In the struggle for existence, the higher vitalized organism survives, and, when the various functions of the extremely complicated machine which we call man are working together in harmonic rhythm, we denominate it health. Such a complex machine, like every organic thing, should have its function, its little part in the world's drama, and evidently was intended to wear out through the exhaustion and decay of its own formative processes, and when applied to man means the rounding out of a long life, subject to the infinite possibilities of subsequent immortality.

The accidents to such a complex machine, the infractions of construction, we have been wont to

call surgical. When, however, by the aid of a better armamentarium, we are enabled to trace the developing colonies of anthrax, until considerable portions of the circulatory system are impeded by the presence of these minute, invisible organisms, or large portions of tissue are robbed of their nutrition and become devitalized by the growth of the bacillus tuberculosis and the attendant changes, who shall declare that these too are not objective, and should, in the broader sense, be considered accidental, and never a part of normal environment? If this be true, it becomes us as a great high priesthood of the most sacred calling, veritably as Moses to an enslaved people, to point out the way of life, its dangers, and how to avoid its accidents, and to direct in the great highway of human endeavor the development and fruition of the human race; a training of the soul's pupillage for immortality. *Mens sana in corpore sano.*

We pause a moment in grateful remembrance of our honored dead. During this year our entire country has again been swept, as with a tornado, by the all-pervading epidemic from which, on account of the exposure and hardship incident to our profession, it has been especially a sufferer. Its death-dealing influence has very naturally fallen most heavily upon the aged and the infirm, although its victims have been taken unsparingly from the young and vigorous of all vocations and all professions. In no one year has our Association been called upon to mourn so large a loss of its members, among whom its distinguished presidents Dr. Campbell, of Georgia, Drs. Storer and Bowditch, of Massachusetts, and now only just added to the list Dr. Richardson, of Louisiana, have been gathered to the "great majority," each a master in his own special department of professional labor, all distinguished as teachers and authors, especially wise and skilful and famous in the public service which they so freely rendered for the welfare,

not alone of their respective communities, but also for the nation.

In the ripe maturity of years each had lived the recipient, in a very large degree, of public honors and emoluments, with the happy consciousness of a just recognition, not only at the hands of a noble profession, but also of a generous public, of the faithful discharge of disinterested duties. All honor to such names; if our young men require illustrious examples of the full fruition of noble lives, well spent in earnest, unselfish labor, let me point them to the careers of our noble chieftains whose loss to-day we mourn, whose memories we honor, and whose examples we emulate.

In the many subdivisions of labor, each is naturally wont to consider his part therein as the more important. To the politician, representation with its attendant possibilities and power seems the high goal of ambition, and to its attainment he bends all his energies.

To the statesman, the adjustment of the great principles of government so that they may be conducive of the greatest good to the largest number.

To the lawyer, the principles of justice and equity as worked out in the experiences of the centuries for the harmonic relationship of individuals to and with each other.

To the clergy, the divine mandate, declared in the so-called Revealed Word, vivified in the flesh, until it permeates all mankind, and each receives and is quickened by its spirit—the evolution of the higher theology—God in us working out his grand purposes, as the foretaste of the immortality beyond. He reads it in the Revealed Word which has been transmitted through the generations, as having emanated long ago from Divinity itself. He points out to you a highway of escape from the penalties of the transgressions of Divine law.

You and I are, in no less degree or kind, a high

priesthood of a no less sacred profession. We read the mandates of the Creator by no uncertain transmission of revealed word. We see them repeated and revivified in every succeeding generation. In letters of living light we read the law in no uncertain language, and we note that its transgression is irrevocable, and oftentimes means death to the organism. There is no mediatorial highway for the escape from its penalties, and no remission of its judgments under plea of ignorant infraction of its mandates. If this is true, the vital interests of the individual rest upon a better knowledge of, and obedience to its laws. In the evolution of medicine and sanitary science lie in large measure the resulting happiness and destinies of the human race. In the broader view, the differentiation of life's factors becomes difficult, and perhaps they were never intended for ultimate analysis.

In the ever-changing kaleidoscopic pattern, the individual factors of man's personality should intertwine and blend as the colors in the hand of a great master, in perfect harmonic symmetry and relationship. To you and I at least it is given to render in no uncertain tone the fiat of God's own law, unchangeable, repeated from age to age, from generation to generation. To us it is given to contribute our part to the symmetrical development of the great tripod of human existence—the mental, the moral, and the physical nature of man, upon the harmonic action of which must ever rest the destinies of the human race.







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